

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ACQUISITION TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ATAP)
POLICY AND PROCEDURES
1 October 2009**

1. REFERENCES: SEE APPENDIX 1

2. APPLICABILITY: This Army Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program (ATAP) Policy and Procedures applies to all current civilian Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ALT) workforce members.

3. BACKGROUND: Title XII of Public Law 101-510, "National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1991, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), November 5, 1990," amended the training law, 5. U.S.C., Chapter 41, by providing in 5 U.S.C., Chapter 4107 and Part 410 of Title 5 Code of Federal Regulation; provisions whereby agencies may authorize training leading to an academic degree in occupations of anticipated shortages of qualified personnel. Public Law 108-375, FY05 DoD Authorization Act, amends Section 1745 of Title 10, United States Code, to extend the "shortage of personnel" designation for qualified civilian acquisition personnel of the Department of Defense (DoD) until September 30, 2010. These policies and procedures implement the ATAP within the Department of the Army (DA).

4. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. The Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management (DDACM):

(1) Has oversight and control of the ATAP policy and procedures.

(2) Is responsible for the development and management of the program providing for the education, training, and career development of ALT workforce members.

(3) Serves as final approval authority for employees accepted to participate in the program and provides approved results to the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) Regional Customer Support Offices (CSOs).

b. USAASC:

(1) Regional Directors:

a) Will provide oversight of the ATAP.

b) Will approve or deny Funding Update Forms.

(2) Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs):

a) Will provide customer assistance on all aspects of ATAP.

b) Will forward inquiries to the ATAP coordinator.

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c) Will ensure widest dissemination of information on ATAP.

(3) The ATAP Coordinator:

a) Will develop, issue, and implement the ATAP Policy and Procedures.

b) Will provide oversight of the ATAP.

c) Will manage the ATAP budget and process all requests for tuition assistance.

d) Will review current student requests for additional funding and time extensions to complete the ATAP program. Will approve or deny Funding Update Forms with final authority handled by the Eastern Regional Director.

e) Will publish the ATAP announcement on the USAASC website and ensure widest dissemination of information on the ATAP announcements, policy and procedures.

f) Will track the progress of each ATAP student ensuring that grade requirements in each class ("B" graduate level or "C" undergraduate level) are maintained and changes to schedules or funding requirements are approved.

g) Will provide customer assistance on all aspects of the ATAP.

h) Will accept, review, and determine eligibility of the ATAP applications.

i) Will plan, organize and conduct the ATAP selection process, providing DDACM with recommended selectee/non-selectee list.

j) Will notify selectees/non-selectees of status.

(4) USAASC Resource Management Office:

a) Will complete fund-cite information and return all documents to the ATAP participant via an e-mail notification.

b) Will return the Standard Form (SF) 182, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training will be returned to the student within seven working days of receipt.

c) Will submit Standard Form (SF) 1034, Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal to Defense Financial and Accounting Service (DFAS) for payment within 10 days of receipt.

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c. The Organization/Supervisor:

- (1) Will be aware of employee's application for the ATAP and ensure individual courses are included and approved on the Individual Development Plan (IDP).
- (2) Will ensure employee knows responsibilities once accepted into the ATAP.
- (3) Will ensure the individual is available for school and not encumbered by excessive overtime or travel.
- (4) Will approve continuous learning points earned from completed classes by documenting on the employee's IDP at the completion of each class.
- (5) Will ensure the ATAP Coordinator is notified immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies the employee for program participation.

d. The ATAP Participants:

- (1) Will apply to and be accepted in an institution of higher learning with accreditation recognized by the United States Department of Education. Accreditation information may be found on <http://www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html>.
- (2) Will submit applications and supporting documentation as outlined in the ATAP announcement. Information can be found on the USAASC website at http://asc.army.mil/career/programs/atap/atap_announce.cfm. Individuals may only submit one application per announcement (e.g., Bachelors Degree, Masters Degree, or twelve to twenty-four (12-24) semester hours of business related disciplines or three semester credit hours for calculus courses). Doctorate and law degrees will not be funded by the ATAP. Questions concerning the ATAP announcement and application process should be directed to the ACMs or the ATAP Coordinator (<http://asc.army.mil/organization/eastern/default.cfm>).
- (3) Will provide accurate Fiscal Year budget information by September 15th of each year. If funding is not fully executed, funding in subsequent fiscal years will be diminished.
- (4) Funds required beyond the funding limits outlined within this document are the responsibility of the individual ATAP participant and/or his organization.
- (5) Entitlements under other federal programs, such as veterans' educational benefits or the Army Civilian Training, Education and Development System (ACTEDS) Program should be used prior to applying for tuition assistance under the ATAP. Applicants or Students will notify the ATAP Coordinator if individual is approved for an

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alternate funding source. Individuals are only allowed funding from one USAASC tuition program.

(6) Must attain a grade of at least a "B" in graduate courses and "C" in undergraduate courses. Failure to attain these minimum grades in each course may result in removal from the program.

(7) Must provide final course grades to the ATAP Coordinator within thirty days of course completion. Failure to provide grade information thirty days after the course completion date may result in loss of future funding or removal from the program with a one year restriction before reapplying. A reminder email will be sent monthly. Any course extensions must be approved by the participant's school and the information provided to the ATAP coordinator.

(8) Will notify the ATAP Coordinator of completion of the ATAP opportunity.

(9) Must reimburse the government for classes with an incomplete grade, withdrawal, or grade below "B" in graduate courses and below "C" in undergraduate courses, or departure from federal government service. All reimbursements for the ATAP will be made out to U.S. Treasury and mailed to: Acquisition Support Center, Attn: ATAP, 9900 Belvoir Road, Suite 101, Bldg 201, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5567.

(10) Must ensure first-line supervisors are made aware of academic or other problems that might interfere with success in the educational process.

(11) Will select courses from among approved programs of study. When planned courses are canceled, conflict with other courses, or are unavailable, provide appropriate substitutes to the ATAP Coordinator prior to course commencement. Failure to provide appropriate substitutes prior to making changes to the course curriculum may result in the loss of future funding or removal from the program.

(12) Will notify the ATAP Coordinator immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies you for program participation or if acceptance into another training opportunity will interfere with the ATAP participation.

(13) Will, in coordination with his/her supervisor, develop a five-year Individual Development Plan (IDP) that lists all courses to be funded by the ATAP. The IDP must be in an approved status and should include current and projected courses. For each course, the ATAP must be selected as the Planned Funding Source.

(14) Will notify the ATAP Coordinator of any position change within the ALT workforce and provide updated contact information.

(15) Will ensure beginning and end dates for each course submitted on the

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SF 182 match exactly the dates identified by the college/university. Adjusting start dates may result in removal from the program. Ensure IDP is updated to reflect the same dates as the submitted SF 182.

(16) Ensure the approved SF 182 is provided to their school for payment and to their organizational training point of contact for their reporting/recording purposes.

5. POLICY:

a. The ATAP is a needs-based selection process. The USAASC announces and conducts the ATAP selection process twice each year. Final selections are based on the availability of funds.

b. Programs of Study. The ATAP program will support the following educational pursuits: 12-24 semester hours in business related disciplines required for certification and Acquisition Corps membership (unless this was attained through previous college work); calculus credit required for certification; an Associates or undergraduate degree for the ALT workforce member; or a graduate degree for those GS-11 and above (or broadband/pay band equivalent) workforce members who meet their current position certification requirements (to at least Level II). All degrees should follow the disciplines that underpin the functions of the ALT workforce. Changes to the approved course of study must be approved by the ATAP Coordinator prior to funding approval for the new course.

c. Learning Institutions. The ATAP funding will support educational pursuits through all schools and programs of study that are nationally or regionally accredited by the U.S. Department of Education.

d. Budget Requirements. Program participants must provide accurate budget information by September 15th of each year. Students will be removed from the program if budget requirements are not received by October 1st and will be required to reapply.

e. Academic Standards. Program participants must complete all courses with at least a grade of "B" in each graduate course and at least a "C" in each undergraduate course. Withdrawal from an ATAP funded course requires the employee to reimburse the government for all costs incurred with that particular course if the course has passed the course drop deadline and costs have been incurred. If the program participant receives three grades below the standard, withdrawals or incompletes, the participant will automatically be removed from the program with a one year restriction before reapplying. If the failing grade is received for an ATAP funded class, ATAP will not provide funding for a repeat class.

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f. Nontraditional Modes of Learning. The ATAP will fund nontraditional modes of learning (courses via television, satellite, and on-line) when the courses are included in the program of study and are part of the school's alternate modes of training.

g. College-Level Examination Program/Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (CLEP/DANTES) Tests. The ATAP funding will be provided for CLEP/DANTES testing. A nonpassing grade on any test will require reimbursement by the individual. CLEP/DANTES funding limits will directly relate to the funding limits of the ATAP program the participant is enrolled in (undergraduate or graduate funding).

h. Electives. Electives required as part of a degree must underpin the functions of the ALT workforce as described in references 3 and 4 (Appendix 1). Electives that do not meet this requirement will not be funded by the ATAP. Courses must underpin the functions of the ALT workforce unless the specific class is an actual degree requirement. The ATAP participants may be required to provide documentation of actual course requirements if the legitimacy of a course is questioned by USAASC. Direct any questions on electives to the ATAP Coordinator.

i. Prerequisite Courses. The ATAP will not fund prerequisite work. This includes any prerequisite course work required for admission into the ATAP-approved course of study, or prerequisite course work that is required to complete a degree program.

j. Payback. The ATAP participant is required to reimburse tuition expenses to the government if grade requirements are not met or withdrawal from a course occurs. Full repayment must be received within 30 days of notice unless a payment plan is approved by the ATAP Coordinator. Payment plans will be no less than \$100 per month and must be received on a monthly basis. If full reimbursement is not received or if the payment plan is not followed, the student will be removed from ATAP until full payment is received. Once full payment is received, the student will be eligible for reinstatement.

k. Attendance. Any ATAP participant not attending scheduled courses for a period of one semester (without prior coordination with ATAP Coordinator) may be removed from the ATAP and required to reapply after one year of removal. Attendance will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. Due to funding constraints, there is no assurance that future funds will be available at the time of reapplication.

l. Students will be automatically removed from the program if they have not taken a class within 12 months of completion from their last course or if the end date from the last approved class has exceeded six months and must reapply through an open announcement in order to be reconsidered for this opportunity.

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6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

a. Funding. Funding for the ATAP will be centrally managed by the USAASC. The ATAP funds will not be provided as reimbursement for funds expended by the student or another organization other than for book costs.

(1) Funding at the graduate level will not exceed \$2050.00 per course and \$10250.00 per fiscal year. Business related semester hours at the Master's level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding required above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participants and/or their organization. The yearly funding limitation of \$10250.00 applies to all the ATAP participants regardless of the number of courses taken.

(2) Funding for a Bachelor's Degree will not exceed \$1550.00 per course and \$7750 per fiscal year. Business related semester hours at the bachelor's level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant and/or his organization. The yearly funding limitation of \$7750.00 applies to all the ATAP participants, regardless of the number of courses taken.

(3) Funding for books is limited to \$150.00 per course. Funding above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant or his organization. Book costs and lab fees (if appropriate) may be included on an SF 182. If the bookstore does not accept an SF 182, or if the required books are not available through the college bookstore, book reimbursement is authorized using an SF 1034 (Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal). All SF 1034s must be submitted with a copy of the purchase receipt after the course end date on the SF 182 but not later than 30 days after. SF 1034s will not be approved if funding is not requested on the SF 182.

(4) Lab fees and technology fees required for course completion will be considered as part of the cost of the course and count as part of the total yearly funding limits.

b. Registration fees, parking costs, travel expenses, entrance exams, graduation fees, and all other expenses not listed in paragraph 6a are not funded by the ATAP. These expenses are the responsibility of the ATAP participant.

c. Changes to pre-approved funding limits must be coordinated through the ATAP Coordinator prior to submission of the SF 182.

d. Current ATAP students may request additional funds or an extension to their ATAP funding without having to reapply to the ATAP. Participants should fill out the ATAP Funding Update Form (http://asc.army.mil/career/programs/atap/atap_docs.cfm) and submit it to the ATAP Coordinator. Funding requests are not guaranteed and are at the discretion of the ATAP Coordinator. The ATAP Funding Update Form may only be used for one additional FY of funding. Participants will be notified in a timely manner if

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their request is approved or denied. Funding extensions only apply for the program for which a participant was originally accepted into the ATAP (i.e., students attending courses for a Bachelor's Degree may not request additional funding toward a Master's Degree). Application to the ATAP is necessary to obtain funds for a higher degree than originally approved.

e. Requests should be submitted according to the instructions in 6d above if the participant is unable to complete his/her coursework in their originally requested timeframe and/or if additional funding per course is necessary (within the ATAP funding limits) to complete the course requirements.

7. PROCEDURES

a. Application:

(1) The formal ATAP announcement and general ATAP information may be found on the ATAP portion of the USAASC homepage at <http://asc.army.mil/career/programs/atap/default.cfm>.

(2) The ATAP application is an automated process. The system is located at <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp/>. The applicant must first enter their selected training on the Individual Development Plan (IDP). To be considered for the ATAP, the applicant must document all planned courses on the IDP for all fiscal years (FY) that the ATAP funding is requested. Courses should be listed in the Education Plan section of the IDP, listed as Planned, and have ATAP selected as the Planned Funding Source. The applicant must submit the completed IDP for supervisory approval and the supervisor must electronically approve the IDP.

(3) After completing the IDP, the applicant must then complete the ATAP application in the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS). When the applicant has submitted the completed application, the supervisor will be notified via e-mail that a packet is awaiting their review.

(4) The applicant's supervisor must also approve the application through the AAPDS web site. This requirement serves to validate notification to the supervisor that the applicant has applied for the ATAP opportunity. Supervisory comments in addition to a signature are strongly recommended.

(5) Individuals must complete an application package for the specific education opportunity being pursued (12-24 semester hours in business related disciplines, 3 semester credit hours for calculus, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, or Master's Degree).

(6) Individuals must complete and submit the application through the online

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AAPDS site by the closing date and time indicated in the open ATAP Announcement in order to be considered for acceptance in the program.

(7) Individuals applying for the ATAP must ensure their application is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the announcement and that all information is accurate and truthful to the best of their knowledge. Preparation assistance may be obtained from the Regional Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs) (a list can be found at <http://asc.army.mil/contacts/acms.cfm>). Incomplete, erroneous, or applications not adhering to announcement guidance will not be eligible for the ATAP consideration and the applicant will be notified via e-mail accordingly. If an application is deemed incomplete or incorrect and the closing date has not arrived, the applicant will be allowed to resubmit the corrected package.

(8) Any changes to the ATAP participant's curriculum must be coordinated and approved by the ATAP Coordinator prior to the curriculum change occurring.

b. ATAP Selection Board Procedures:

(1) The ATAP Coordinator receives and reviews all application packages for completeness and eligibility. The ATAP Coordinator then forwards eligible application packages to the Final Review Board for review.

(2) The automated ATAP needs-based selection review process ranks the applicants based on a predefined set of criteria, as outlined in the ATAP Board Memorandum of Instruction, and compiles a Relative Standing List (RSL) for approval by the DDACM.

(3) The DDACM determines the funding available for the RSL developed by the automated ATAP selection process.

(4) Upon approval of the RSL by the DDACM, USAASC prepares and sends written notification of acceptance to the selectees within three weeks of the RSL approval. In addition, USAASC also sends email notification to applicants who were not selected.

(5) The ATAP Coordinator will compile application statistics to include the number of application packages received by USAASC. The statistics will include the names of all applicants and assigned duty location regions, number of application packages that were not selected to go to the board, number of applications that went to the board and total number of applications that were submitted to USAASC.

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c. Upon Acceptance:

(1) No later than thirty (30) days prior to the start of the course, participants must submit a SF 182 to the ATAP Coordinator. The SF 182 is to be created and submitted within the AAPDS system (<https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp/index.cfm>). Any forms not created and submitted within the AAPDS will be returned without action. The required fields of the SF 182s are highlighted within the automated form in AAPDS. The SF 182s do not require the signature of the individual's supervisor and/or training officer. The approved SF 182 will have the digital signatures of the ATAP Coordinator and the USAASC Resource Manager in the appropriate sections on the document. Any SF 182 submitted after the course start date will be returned. It will be the individual's responsibility or the individual's organization to provide funding.

(2) Beginning dates for each course submitted on the SF 182 must match exactly the dates identified by the college/university. Participant's IDP must be up to date and reflect the accurate dates of courses for which they are submitting an SF 182.

(3) Courses that start before the approved funding date of the applicant will not be funded.

8. LABOR RELATIONS: Activities are reminded to meet all statutory labor relations obligations in the implementation of this policy.

9. EFFECTIVE DATE, EXPIRATION DATE, AND IMPLEMENTATION: This policy is effective immediately, supersedes all previous ATAP policies and procedures, and is effective until rescinded.



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APPENDIX 1

1. Title 10, United States Code, Chapter 87, Defense Acquisition Workforce, Section 1701-1764, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act of 1990, as amended (DAWIA II) - http://www.dau.mil/library/2DAWIAPL108_375C1.pdf
2. DoDD 5000.52, "Defense Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Workforce Education, Training, and Career Development Program", January 12, 2005 - <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/500052p.pdf>
3. DODI 5000.66, "Operation of the Defense Acquisition Technology, and Logistics Workforce Education, Training and Career Development Program", December 21, 2005 - <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/500066p.pdf>
4. DoD Desk Guide for, "Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Career Management", January 10, 2006 - <http://www.dau.mil/workforce/01-10-06%20ATL%20Workforce%20Desk%20Guide%20Issued%20Version%20with%20Forms.pdf>
5. AR 70-1, Army Acquisition Policy, December 2003 – http://www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/r70_1.pdf
6. Memorandum, "Enforcement of Mandatory Certification Requirements Relating to Acquisition Workforce and Corps Members," October 12, 2006 - http://asc.army.mil/docs/policy/Enforcement_Mandatory_Certification_Requirements.pdf
7. Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Catalog - www.dau.mil/catalog
8. DoD Directive 5000.57, Defense Acquisition University, October 22, 1991 – <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/500057p.pdf>